

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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LIMDIS

FOR AMB SHLAUDEMAN AND GEN ROSSON FROM CHARGE ASENCIO

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS VE

SUBJ: NOMINATION OF COL JOHN C SCHOLTZ, JR. AS COMMANDER OF
THE US MILITARY GROUP IN VENEZUELA

REF: CINCSO MSG P 262126Z MAR 75

1. COL SCHOLTZ'S QUALIFICATIONS ARE IMPRESSIVE AND HE SEEMS WELL SUITED TO REPLACE COL BUSH AS COMMANDER OF THE US MILITARY GROUP. HOWEVER, ON APRIL 2, CHIEF OF THE VENEZUELAN JOINT STAFF MAJOR GENERAL AUGE INDICATED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE NOMINATION OF AN AIR FORCE OFFICER FOR THIS POSITION. HE POINTED OUT TO COL BUSH THAT THE US DEFENSE ATTACHE WAS AN AIR FORCE COLONEL ALSO AND THAT THIS WOULD RESULT IN THE TWO TOP US MILITARY SPOTS IN VENEZUELA BEING FILLED BY AIR FORCE PERSONNEL. IN THE PRESENCE OF THE J-3, BRIG GEN MONSALVE DURAND, AUGE COMMENTED THAT THE COMUSMILGP POSITION SHOULD REMAIN A US ARMY SLOT. DURAND CONCURRED. GEN AUGE ASKED BUSH WHAT COULD BE DONE ABOUT THIS SITUATION AND WAS ADVISED THAT SINCE THE MILGP IS HERE TO SERVE THE ARMED FORCES OF VENEZUELA, THE OPTION WAS OPEN FOR THE VENEZUELAN TO APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE THE NOMINATION WHEN PRESENTED. FYI: THE TREATIES,
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NOW EXPIRED EXCEPT FOR THE NAVAL MISSION TREATY, STATE GENERALLY

THAT THE COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION SHALL BE MUTUALLY DETERMINED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS. THE JCS DECISION TO ROTATE THE COMMAND OF THE MILGP AMONG THE SERVICES COMMENCING IN 1975 WAS A UNILATERAL DECISION ON THE PART OF THE U.S. THIS DECISION WAS APPEALED BY AMB MCCLINTOCK THROUGH THE MILGP, BUT TO NO AVAIL. AMB MCCLINTOCK FELT STRONGLY THAT THE COMMANDER OF THE MILGP HERE SHOULD BE AN ARMY OFFICER DUE TO THE SIZE AND INFLUENCE OF THE ARMY IN THE VENEZUELAN HIERARCHY. END FYI.

2. WHILE GEN AUGE'S DISSATISFACTION DOES NOT REPRESENT AN OFFICIAL TURNDOWN, I FEEL IT IMPORTANT THAT YOU BE ADVISED THAT HOST GOVERNMENT MAY CHALLENGE THE NOMINATION OF AN AIR FORCE OFFICER FOR THIS SPOT.
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